

What is "Kansas Work?"

Among the papers found in the possession of the mad fanatic Brown, when he was taken, arms in hand against the peace of the land, at Harper's Ferry, was a letter dated at Peterboro', N. Y., on the 4th of June, 1859, from Hon. Gerritt Smith, lately a member of Congress of the Republican party of the State of New York. In this letter the writer encloses a draft for a large sum of money, "in order," as he expressly says, "to keep Brown at his Kansas work;" and this expression occurs no less than four times in the letter.

"I have done," says Mr. Smith to Mr. Brown, "what I could, thus far, for Kansas, and what I could to keep you at your Kansas work."

"I must continue to do, to keep you at your Kansas work."

"You live in our hearts, and our prayer to God is that you may have strength to continue in your Kansas work."

"What a noble man is Mr. Kearney! How liberally he has contributed to keep you in your Kansas work!"

Now Brown, to whom this letter is addressed, a short time ago, had not been in Kansas for a year, and there is nothing to show that he ever intended to go there again. So that this "Kansas work" yet to be done, and in which money is advanced by Mr. Smith and Mr. Kearney, and Heaven is prayed to enable Ossawatimie Brown to continue and be kept, was work to be done elsewhere. It would be insulting to the common sense of the dullest reader to suggest to him, perusing that letter in the light thrown upon it by the conduct of Brown at Harper's Ferry, the possibility of its having any other meaning than the same work in Virginia which he had formerly carried on in Kansas. And what that was is a matter of history.

Mr. Gerritt Smith makes the distinction plainly, in this letter, between the past and the future. He has done what he could for Kansas, and also what he could to keep Brown at his "Kansas work." And there is a significance in this quadruple repetition of this phrase, implying future action, which amounts to the clearest exposition of its true meaning.

Now, if this letter of the distinguished Free-soil, Republican or Abolitionist leader, at the North, (it matters not by which of these names he is called,) means any thing at all, and we think it fearfully pregnant with meaning, it means just this: that its writer is to all intents and purposes, not only an accessory before the fact, but moreover a principal, in the atrocious crime committed at Harper's Ferry, by the Browns, Cook and Stephens, and their misguided followers. This letter was written in June, and sent, with the money it contained, to Brown, during the latter's residence in Virginia. It could mean nothing else than to apply to the "Kansas work" he was doing, and was about to do, there. We cannot see how there can be any two interpretations put upon it; and viewed in its true light, how there can be any question that it forms a part, and an important part, of the criminal transaction, for which, as it seems to us, it would be the extreme of injustice to make this miserable maniac, Brown, and his fellow fanatics, solely amenable.

An overt act is clearly made out, we think, as against Mr. Gerritt Smith. As yet, there has no evidence been made public, to the same degree implicating other persons. That "noble man," Mr. Kearney, who, according to Mr. Smith, has so "liberally contributed to keep Brown in his Kansas work," is yet unrevealed; and the names of those who subscribed for the Sharpe's rifles, twenty-five of which the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher pledged his Plymouth Church, in Brooklyn, to raise, and which were raised, are not known; and there are other persons and things not yet known, and yet to be known, which, doubtless, will throw desirable light on the source whence aid for the prosecution of "Kansas

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else than to apply to the "Kansas work" he was doing, and was about to do, there. We cannot see how there can be any two interpretations put upon it; and viewed in its true light, how there can be any question that it forms a part, and an important part, of the criminal transaction, for which, as it seems to us, it would be the extreme of injustice to make this miserable maniac, Brown, and his fellow fanatics, solely amenable.

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We notice that the Republican party, through its prominent spokesmen and organs, repudiate this act as none of theirs, and as by no means incidental to their principles, their teachings and their purposes. A most strenuous effort has been made by many of them to produce and stamp this impression upon the public mind. But had we the time and space at command, we think it would be by no means difficult to prove, out of their own mouths and columns, that they are, virtually, the suggestors, the promoters, the sustainers, the aiders and the abettors, alike of the act and the actors. *Ex post facto*, they may hold up their hands in holy horror at the crime of the baffled traitors, but they cannot wipe out the record of what they have said and done, in fomenting the treason.

Why, not to multiply proofs of what we say, on the evening of the very day when Brown and his party were engaged in their murderous work on the Virginia and Maryland line, Mr. George W. Curtis, one of the most prominent and eloquent exponents of the principles of the Republican party, delivered in Beecher's church, in Brooklyn, a "Plymouth lecture," in the course of which he asserted plainly, and in terms, that the Republican was but a branch of the Abolition party, and that the destruction of slavery was the basis of its policy. And as to the Republican newspaper organs, we could transcribe column upon column from their pages, expressing the same principles, and in language even more specific and unmistakable. Take, for example, the following, from the Independent Democrat, an organ of the Republicans in New Hampshire:

"The cure for slavery prescribed by Redpath is the only infallible remedy, and men must foment insurrection among the slaves in order to cure the evils. It can never be done by concessions and compromises. It is a great evil, and must be extinguished by still greater ones. It is positive and imperious in its approaches, and must be overcome with equally positive means. You must commit an insult to arrest a burglar, and slavery is not arrested without a violation of law and the cry of fire."

The speeches we have heard in the Senate of the United States, asserting amenability to a "higher law" than the Constitution and the statute book; the speeches we have heard on the stump, by eminent party leaders, proclaiming the existence of "irrepressible conflicts" between the sections; the appeals we have heard from the pulpit for the means of purchasing Sharpe's rifles for the purpose of carrying on such conflicts, and vindicating such law, are all parts of this "Kansas work"—this glorious work—to the carrying on of which the Gerritt Smiths, the Whitmans, and the Kearneys so nobly contribute their means, and for their portion of which the miserable fanatics of the Brown and Cook stamp must pay with their lives.